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硕 士 学 位 论 文

精神与心灵的变化  
——《论语》在泰国社会的应用研究

A Study on Spiritual Betterment  
-- The Adaptation of Confucius' *Analects* in Thai Society

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## 摘 要

本论文的研究目的是为了要了解泰国出现的社会与家庭和人类精神有关的问题。由于近来的泰国社会产生了比较严重的社会问题，所以本论文以此为出发点，研究认为在泰国社会缺乏“仁”的问题，进而提出改进的方法。这个方法基本以个人为主，向家庭成员灌输和培养独立思想。本论文收集泰国新闻来判断与分析社会缺乏“仁”之现象，集中在 2009 年 10 月至 2010 年 3 月，总共六个月的新闻为此论文的依据。论文主要论点分为两大部分：关于家庭培养问题和关于个人精神方面问题。指出在泰国改造社会时，缺乏儒家的“仁”之精神，建议使用孔子《论语》里的教育方法，尤其是“仁”的观念。这个论点成为本文的主要目标，同时可以通过泰国孔子学院来传播孔子的教学方式。

**关键词:** 孔子；论语；泰国家庭社会；泰国社会问题

## Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to study about problems happening in Thai society which related to family and human's minds. Because there are many problems which are happening in Thailand now, the intention of this thesis is to create a way to reduce the problems which result from a lack of conscious humanity in individuals and in society. The main focus is to point to individuals, which is essentially rooted in indoctrination from the family group, and also allows for self-cultivation. The thesis looks to analyze the news in the society, about problems that related to family and collective consciousness, in a six-month duration, between October 2009 to March 2010. From the focus of the thesis, the news is divided into two main parts: problems related to family and problems related to collective consciousness. The method that is produced to resolve the problems is that of providing teachings of Confucius in the *Book of Analects* as a guide to the transmission of ideas about humanity to people in society. The intention is to potentially present the teachings of Confucius as mediated through the Confucius Institutes in Thailand.

**Keywords:** Confucius; *Analects*; Thai family; Thai social problem

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

In terms of philosophy, whenever people discuss Chinese philosophers, Confucius is considered to be the top of the range. Nevertheless, if we look back into the history, during the life of Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.), his ideas were quite unpopular. After his death, his disciples and those who interested in his teaching began to spread his ideas; finally, they became popular. However, in the period of modern China, Confucianism was refused because the leader of China in that period regarded it as conservative. The reviving of Confucianism happened again under the present leader, Hu Jin-Tao. He brought the ideas of Confucius back to Chinese society. This is due to the belief that “Confucianism is never dead.”

In the present day, Confucian ideas are not only popular within Mainland China, but also outside the country; Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan are examples. Moreover, his teaching and his ideas seem to influence people in various fields; on economy, on education, on philosophy, etc. Thus this begged the question, that if China and those countries have successfully incorporated Confucius’ ideas in their countries in many fields, why not examine the situation how his ideas may be applied to Thailand?

According to the situation in Thailand nowadays, there are many problems in the country. Most of them cause social issues. From this point, it makes me think that if Thai people bring the teaching of Confucius and his ideas to complement of religions, I convince that this can help to improve the collective condition.

The reasoning behind this thesis emphasizes the introduction of *The Analects of Confucius*<sup>1</sup> - the collecting of quotations of Confucius and his disciples - to Thai people. The main purpose of the research intends to apply the ideas in *The Analects* to Thai society. In particular, family units are the major perspective from which I want to show to application of Confucian ideas. The goal is ultimately the betterment of people in the society. The idea of doing the thesis is that I see the problems and want to find solution to improve the society. Therefore, *The Analects* is the answer in my mind which can used as a guide on the way to solving the collective problems of Thailand.

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<sup>1</sup> In the following parts of my thesis, “*The Analects*” refers to “*The Analects of Confucius*.”

## **Objectives:**

1. To introduce Confucius, ‘The Great Teacher of China’, to the Thai people.
2. To show the ideas of Confucius through *The Analects* to Thais.
3. To introduce *The Analects* to Thais
4. To adapt *The Analects* in an intelligible way for its introduction to Thais.
5. To adapt the ideas in *The Analects* into Thai society as a guide and a way to live, and as complement to religions.
6. To introduce a way to apply the ideas and the teachings of Confucius’ *Analects* as a mean to improve the collective consciousness.
7. To formulate a means by which to apply the ideas in *The Analects* as a proper way to solve Thailand’s social problems.
8. To show the perspectives from which to observe adaptation of *The Analects*’ core concepts through family units in Thai society.

## **Research Methodology:**

This research will investigate textbooks, journals and news reports from the media, in turn dividing it into two sources: primary sources and secondary sources. The primary documents included *The Analects*, journals which are related to Confucianism, textbooks related to Thai society, and news reports in the media; all of which are both in Thai and English version and will be analyzed to support to the research. The secondary documents are textbooks which are counted as basic knowledge and support the overall hypothesis of the thesis.

## **Significance of the Research:**

The importance of this research is to show that abstract ideas, thoughts, and philosophy can nonetheless help to improve the society. Theories do not belong simply in philosophy class, but can be adapted to impact on reality. Moreover, the research also makes the way of learning philosophy more interesting. This is because this is a methodology rooted in real case studies which should allow learners to achieve more understanding. In addition, not only learners benefit, but people in the society as well. Besides, to study Confucius’ ideas can help people to improve themselves, and finally lead to a peaceful society. With regards to Confucianism, I am rather convinced that if there are people interested in using his thought in society, it



will absolutely be useful. If it is happens in Thailand, the social problems will be reduced for sure.

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## Chapter 2

### Confucius and *The Analects*

551 B.C.E. was the year that Confucius, whose name was Qiu (丘) and polite name was Zhongni (仲尼), was born in China. He was born in Kong (孔) family in the State of Lu (鲁国) in Shandong Province (山东省) in mainland China. Most Chinese are proud of him because he produced and promoted the early Chinese philosophy that makes people seem to be interested in him and his works. However there is a noticeable point that is interesting for me. People not only in China, but also people in East Asia (for instance Japan, Singapore, Korea, and Vietnam), and even people in European countries research Confucius. Some of the countries also use his ideas in various other fields, for instance economics and education, among others. Certainly in China, people are also bringing his teachings and ideas to use in their whole lives, or I can say that some of Confucius' teachings are in Chinese people's blood.

There was an article posted on a website on January 24, 2008, whose topic was primarily related to the topic of "Chinese people return to Confucius."<sup>1</sup> The content of this article talked about the bringing back of Confucius' teaching to use again in China. Chinese leaders took an important role in this, and would like to use the concept of humanity as a basic precept of the government system. This concept was clearly visible in the time of the Chinese President, Hu Jin-Tao. Moreover, Chinese Government tried to stimulate the study, research, and application of Confucius' teaching in all social organizations. For example, in the field of education, the Chinese Government started to establish 'Confucius Institutes' by cooperating with universities around the world (also in Thailand). The purpose of the institutes was to teach Chinese language, Chinese philosophy and Chinese culture. On the family side, Confucius focused on the importance of family as the first merit, yet also humanism and also the fundamental organization of the society. On the relationship between human beings and history, Confucius taught that "the study of the past defines the future." The conclusion of the article was that Chinese were beginning to learn that

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<sup>1</sup> ดร.เสรี พงศ์พิศ, "เมื่อจีนกลับไปหาขงจื้อ: Chinese people return to Confucius", <[http://www.phongphit.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=346&Itemid=48](http://www.phongphit.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=346&Itemid=48)>, 5 Feb. 2010.

true happiness came from their souls, akin to the concepts which Confucius and other Chinese ancestors taught for several thousand years.

From the article and the use of Confucius' ideas in many countries proved that his teachings were worth in using for human beings and also in many fields related to society, for instance family, education, government, and the economy. Moreover, it might be noted that the readers also feel interested to know what his characteristics were and why people prefer to use his teachings to develop and solve problems in these countries.

## 2.1 Characteristics of Confucius

If we talk about Confucius' personality, we can say that he is an idealistic person unlike almost anyone else of his period. Most human beings have ambition - what they want to get - yet they have to find the way by forgetting the means by which to acquire it. How can we solve this problem in the present time? I think we had better to learn from the ancient wisdom, especially Confucius. In the book "*Confucius: The Analects*", there is a quotation that Confucius said that,

In the eating of coarse rice and the drinking of water, the using of one's elbow for a pillow, joy is to be found. Wealth and rank attained through immoral means have as much to do with me as passing clouds.<sup>2</sup>

From his words, we can see through to his morals, in particular that he was a person who had virtue. This is what people should learn and follow his path. His meaning from these quotes was that people should realize the virtue of having morality, which shows that to have morals is one of Confucius' characteristics, and people should study his works to be their guiding principle in life. I think the characteristic of Confucius is very important for living in the society. The reason for him to say this simply because people have morality in their mind means people are getting gradually less bad. If most people have merits, it could indicate that people can potentially live in peace.

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<sup>2</sup> *Confucius: The Analects*, Book VII, Chapter 16.

Besides morals, Confucius was a person who was fond of learning. He said, “I was not born with knowledge, but being fond of antiquity, I am quick to seek it.”<sup>3</sup> It is a truth that no one is born with knowledge. Knowledge is a result of learning, reading, listening, and experiences, and the most important thing is to intend to, and endeavor to, complete it. Confucius loved to learn everything about history. He also collected and compiled incidents in history; specifically in the *Book of Changes* (易经), *Book of Songs* (诗经), *Book of Rites* (礼记), *Book of History* (书经), and *Spring and Autumn Annals* (春秋).

Take for instance Confucius’ description of a situation inside the Grand Temple,

When the master<sup>4</sup> went inside the Grand Temple<sup>5</sup>, he asked questions about everything. Someone remarked, “Who said that the son of the man from Zhou<sup>6</sup> understood the rites? When he went inside the Grand Temple, he asked questions about everything.”

The Master, on hearing of this said, “The asking of questions is in itself the correct rite.”<sup>7</sup>

This exemplifies that he was always learning. Whatever he did not know, he sought to learn. One more instance of his characteristic,

The master said, “Do I possess knowledge? No, I do not. A rustic put a question to me and my mind was a complete blank. I kept hammering at the two sides of the question until I got everything out of it.”<sup>8</sup>

This shows about another kind of his learning method. Confucius’ special characteristic also teaches us that although we have very much of knowledge, we still

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<sup>3</sup> *Confucius: The Analects*, Book VII, Chapter 20.

<sup>4</sup> The master means Confucius.

<sup>5</sup> Grand Temple: the temple of the Duke of Zhou, the founder of the State of Lu. See Yang Bojun and D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2008, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> The man from Zhou refers to Confucius’ father. See Yang Bojun and D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analect*, p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> *Confucius: The Analects*, Book III, Chapter 15.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Book IX, Chapter 8.

have many things we do not know. So, in this case, first Confucius did not know the answer that the rustic asked him, and then he tried to find out and finally understood it. His words remind me of a quote, “There is no end to learning,” which indicates it is a classic quote of education.

Once, the two of Confucius disciples were talking together,

Zi-qin asked Zi-gong, “When the Master arrives in a state, he invariably gets to know about its government. Does he seek this information? Or is it given him?”

Zi-gong said, “The Master gets it through being cordial, well-behaved, respectful, frugal and deferential. The way the Master seeks it is, perhaps, different from the way other men seek it.”<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, there was the Governor of She asking Zi-lu about Confucius. Zi-lu did not answer. The Master said, “Why did you not say something to this effect: he is the sort of man who forgets to eat when he works himself into a frenzy over some problem, who is so full of joy that he forgets his worries and who does not notice the onset of old age.”<sup>10</sup>

One time Confucius talked to his disciple, Gong-xi Hua. He said, “How dare I claim to be a sage or a benevolent man? Perhaps it might be said of me that I can keep at it without getting tired and go on teaching without growing weary.” Gong-xi Hua said, “This is precisely where we disciples are unable to learn from your examples.”<sup>11</sup> This conversation shows that Confucius had been persistent in what he was doing.

There was also a conversation in which Chen Si-bai asked whether Duke Zhao was versed in the rites. Confucius said, “Yes.”

After Confucius had gone, Chen Si-bai, in bowing to Wu-ma Qi, invited him forward and said, “I have heard that the gentleman does not show partiality. Does he show it nevertheless? The Lord took as wife a daughter of Wu, who thus is of the

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<sup>9</sup> *Confucius: The Analects*, Book I, Chapter 10.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Book VII, Chapter 19.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Book VII, Chapter 34.

same clan as himself,<sup>12</sup> but he allows her to be called Wu Meng Zi.<sup>13</sup> If the Lord is versed in the rites, who isn't?"

When Wu-ma Qi recounted this to him, the Master said, "I am a fortunate man. Whenever I make a mistake, other people are sure to notice it."<sup>14</sup>

This is another aspect of Confucius' character. We can see that he admitted to himself that he made a mistake. The writer thinks that this is an important characteristic we should follow. Whenever we make mistake and there is someone to tell us about such a mistake we have made, we should admit to ourselves the error and endeavor to adjust it. From the writer's point of view, we may think of this as a way to prevent ourselves from make a similar mistake again.

There was a quotation that Confucius talked about himself, he said, "At fifteen I set my heart on learning; at thirty I took my stand; at forty I was never in two minds; at fifty I understood the Decree of Heaven; at sixty my ear was attuned; at seventy I followed my heart's desire without overstepping the line."<sup>15</sup>

From his words, the writer interpreted that he was determination and purposeful in learning and teaching even since he was very young. This might be because he saw the importance of having knowledge and also probably because poor families had no opportunity to send their children to study at school in ancient times. Confucius established the first private school in China and he taught every class of people who intended on studying. When people had chance to study, whenever they encounter with problems, they learned to solve it. Or whenever they were confronted with any situation, not only good but bad, they might have been able to examine and make a decision with regards to that situation, and progress in the right way, as he did.

In Book Ten of *The Analects*, it mostly talks about Confucius' habits and his actions. For instance, the following chapters recorded relevant conversations:

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<sup>12</sup> Bearing the name Ji. See Yang Bojun and D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects*, p. 121.

<sup>13</sup> When she should be called Wu Ji (吴姬). Calling her Wu Meng Zi was an attempt to gloss over the fact that she shared the same clan name of Ji. See Yang Bojun and D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects*, p. 121.

<sup>14</sup> *Confucius: The Analects*, Book VII, Chapter 31. Being a native of Lu, Confucius would rather be criticized for partiality than appear to be openly critical of the Duke. See Yang Bojun and D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects*, p. 121.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Book II, Chapter 4.

“In the local community, Confucius was submissive and seemed to be inarticulate. In the ancestral temple and at court, though fluent, he did not speak lightly.”<sup>16</sup>

“He did not converse at meals; nor did not talk in bed.”<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, in chapter 25, there were some details to describe Confucius’ characteristics:

When he met a bereaved person in mourning dress, even though it was someone he was on familiar terms with, he invariably assumed a solemn expression. When he met someone wearing a ceremonial cap or someone blind, even though they were well-known to him, he invariably showed them respect.

On passing a person dressed as a mourner he would lean forward with his hands on the cross-bar of his carriage to show respect; he would act in a similar manner towards a person carrying official documents.

When a sumptuous feast was brought on, he invariably assumed a solemn expression and rose to his feet.

When there was a sudden clap of thunder or a violent wind, he invariably assumed a solemn attitude.<sup>18</sup>

Additionally, in chapter 26, “When climbing into a carriage, he invariably stood squarely and grasped the mounting-cord. When in the carriage, he did not turn towards the inside, nor did he shout or point.”<sup>19</sup>

Unlike other philosophers, his ideas in the arena of politics were interesting. According to Li Yunchuan, the core of Confucius thoughts was “Ren” (仁) or benevolence (loving people). “Benevolence” or “Ren” was love and devotion to parents and loyalty to the country. Children should treat their parents with filial piety, that is, treat them with respect and obedience. They should also show love to people of the same or lower generation. Moreover, loyalty was the biggest thing in the society. People should be loyal, honest and faithful to those in higher ranks and at the

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<sup>16</sup> *Confucius: The Analects*, Book X, Chapter 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Book X, Chapter 10.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Book X, Chapter 25.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Book X, Chapter 26.

same time should forgive or pardon those in the same or lower positions. It can be seen that Confucius placed a high value on ethical cultivation and harmonious relationship. Thus, his idea of “Benevolence” was in effect the spirit of “Harmony (和)”.<sup>20</sup>

We can see that these characteristics of Confucius are good behaviors that we should follow. For example, the virtue of having morals; if people always have consciousness, they will not harm or do bad things to others, which can lead to peace. A love of learning is also a good thing to follow. At least we find something that we are interested in and go deeply into the subject, this can be the beginning of learning and can also develop a person who is fond of learning. Even being cordial, respectful, or admitting to mistakes is something which we should do, but some people still overlook; thus, this is the time we should learn from him; not only these aspects which the writer made examples of, but also very much details which are in the rest of *The Analects*. From this, we will discuss *The Analects* and the readers will know much about it and also find a guideline to use *The Analects* to adapt to their life.

## 2.2 Introduction to Confucius' *Analects*

“《论语》” or “*The Analects*” was the book compiled by Confucius disciples after his death. The word “论 (lùn)” means to discuss; “语 (yǔ)” means speech. So, “lunyu” means discussion of speech, which is the characteristic of this book. In the book records about the discussions between Confucius and his disciples, Confucius and others, or between his disciples, and also his words that taught to others, etc. In the book, it categorizes into 20 sub-books, and each book also divides into chapters. There are many topics in the book: humanity, morality, rites, knowledge, education, government, filial-piety, music, and Confucius himself. At present, “*The Analects*” are still popular in China because of a professor of China's Beijing Normal University, Yu Dan (于丹). In late 2006, a series of her lectures entitled “Yu Dan's Insights into *The Analects*” (《于丹<论语>心得》) was broadcasted for seven days on China Central Television (CCTV) as a part of the Lecture Room (《百家讲

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<sup>20</sup> See Li Yunchuan, *A Panorama of Chinese Culture*. China: Dalian University of Technology Press, 2008, p. 60.



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